

Best Management Practices



Office Paper Recycling

Why recycle? When you recycle you can: cut disposal costs; possibly create new revenue from the sale of recovered materials; and lessen your environmental impact by adopting sustainable practices. And recycling is not only good for the environment, it's also good for South Carolina's economy – providing more than 15,000 jobs and \$1.5 billion in annual personal income.

Paper is easy to recycle, but the value of the commodity is based on the type and amount of paper being recycled. If properly recycled, businesses not only avoid disposal costs and perhaps add new revenue, but conserve natural resources as well.

Now that you've decided to recycle, here are some simple steps to start a recycling program.

Gather the facts.

■ Assess you waste.

- ❑ Take a look in your garbage cans and dumpsters. How much paper are you throwing away?
- ❑ What kinds of paper do you have?

■ Find a market for your recyclables.

- ❑ To find a recycler, visit www.scdhec.gov/smartbusiness for market resources.
- ❑ Find out what levels of service and prices are available to you from different recyclers.
- ❑ Find out what grades of paper are accepted and if there are any separation requirements.
- ❑ For further assistance, contact your local solid waste department or call the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control's (DHEC) Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling (Office) at 1-800-768-7348. For additional information about recycling in your community, visit www.scdhec.gov/recycle.

Plan collection procedures.

■ Containers

- ❑ Determine the size and number of recycling bins needed for your program.
- ❑ Consider giving each employee a paper recycling bin, this will make it more convenient for him or her to recycle.
- ❑ Keep in mind that recycling does not increase the overall volume of waste, but simply requires separation. Once containers are separated, it may be that the remaining waste is minimal and can allow downsizing of trash cans, etc., to accommodate new storage demands for containers.

■ Collection Locations

- ❑ Place containers near copiers, mailrooms and printers.
- ❑ Place deskside bins next to each employee's desk.
- ❑ It's a good idea to have one common collection container for every 15-20 employees.

Let everyone know.

■ Signage

- ❑ Post signs on bins and above collection containers indicating what materials are acceptable and what should be kept out.
- ❑ Use pictures whenever possible.



■ Employee Education

- Get the word out to all employees about the new recycling procedures. Send e-mails giving instructions on how to properly recycle office paper.
- Mention the recycling program at staff meetings and keep employees informed of any changes and your success.

■ Custodial Staff

- It is very important to inform the custodial staff of these new procedures because they will most likely be responsible for some, if not all, of this process.
- Consider making signs to fit their needs.

Collection Procedures

- **Keep it contaminant-free.** No matter which grade of paper you decide to collect, there are a number of items that should not be mixed with the paper.
 - Common contaminants include: food; metal fasteners; transparencies; plastic packaging; beverage containers; as well as paper towels, napkins and paperboard.
 - Check with your recycler for a complete list of contaminants.



R²: Recycle and Report

It's smart business to recycle. It's also smart business to report your recycling activities. South Carolina has set a goal to recycle 35 percent of its municipal solid waste. Your numbers count and are needed to reach that goal.

Reporting is easy. **Keep track of what and how much you recycled.** You can keep your own records or your recycler may do it for you and report the information back to you. **Once you have the numbers, call your county recycling coordinator.**

For contact information on your county recycling coordinator, visit www.scdhec.gov/recycle and click on county programs or call DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling at **1-800-768-7348**.

Reporting is done by fiscal year so you need to keep track of your recycling activities from July 1 to June 30. You should report your information to your county recycling coordinator after June 30 (the earlier the better). **Do your part. Recycle and report.**

Recycling. It doesn't cost. It pays.

For more information regarding business recycling and waste reduction, call **1-800-768-7348** or visit www.scdhec.gov/smartbusiness.



The South Carolina Smart Business Recycling Program is a partnership of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control's Center for Waste Minimization, Small Business Environmental Assistance Program and Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling as well as the S.C. Department of Commerce's Recycling Market Development Program. The program provides a variety of services to help businesses reduce waste, recycle and develop sustainable practices.

South Carolina
Department of Commerce

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